

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:204
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008
CAPTURE OF INDIAN FISHERMEN
Pathak Shri Harin

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether hundreds of Indian Fishermen and their fishing boats were captured by Pakistan Marine Security Agency(PMSA) during the last three years, till-date;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of fishermen and their boats, State-wise and year-wise;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for their release; and
- (d) the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a)&(b) Yes. 460 Indian fishermen were taken into custody by the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) in 2005, 365 in 2006, 124 in 2007 and 22 in 2008. 251 boats were similarly taken into custody between 2003 and 2005, 58 in 2006, 29 in 2007 and 4 in 2008. As per information available, 372 Indian fishermen and 342 boats continue to be in the custody of the Pakistan authorities. The fishermen and boats are mostly from Gujarat and the Union Territory of Diu and Daman.

(c)&(d) Since 2005, 1579 fishermen have been released by Pakistan including those taken into custody before 2005. Government have been taking up the issue of the release of fishermen and their boats regularly with the Government of Pakistan including at the highest level. A Judicial Committee comprising judges from India and Pakistan has been formed to expedite the release of prisoners in either country. The Committee will meet for its first meeting on 26-27 February 2008.